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MAYURA

Newsletter of the Bird Watchers' Club of Andhra Pradesh

Vol.II JANUARY, 1981 No.1

IN THE CAUSE OF CONSERVATION

The Birdwatchers' Club of Andhra Pradesh was started with a few enthusiastic birdwatchers meeting in Nehru Zoological Park on January 12, 1980, with the aims and objectives of making young and old aware about the need to protect fastly dwindling bird fauna and to inculcate among them the love of Nature. The club was formed with the blessings and good wishes of Dr.Salim Ali, World Famous Ornithologist who has turned the hobby of birdwatching into a purposeful profession. During this past one year, we are very much encouraged by the enthusiastic response received from the increasing number of members joining the club and their keen interest in the club activites. The club members during their birdwatching field trips could observe varied avifauna found in and around Hyderabad. They were able to identify a few potential refuges such as Shamirpet, Palmakole, Manjira and Chilkoor tanks and deer parks in Vanasthalipuram, Chilkoor and Shamirpet and Hilly areas of Banjara for both migratory and resident bird species.

In coordination with Corbett Nature Club and Hyderabad Nature Club the Birdwatchers' Club is striving to educate the public on the need to help in preservation of bird fauna, wild life and forests.

The Club hopes to play an increasing role in fulfilling its objectives in future.

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C O N T E N T S

* In the cause of conservation: Editorial 1

* The Birds of Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam-II - Sudhir Vyas, I.F.S. 3

* Some spots excellent for watching Himalayan Birds - Sum - Sumanth R. Shah. 8

* Some birds of Tirumalai Hills - A. Shivraj 11

* Survey of Birds of Andhr a Pradesh Part - IV - Pushp Kumar. 12

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MAYURA - FOR CIRCULATION AMONG MEMBERS

THE BIRDS OF HYDERABAD AND VISAKHAPATNAM - II

by
Sudhir Vyas, IAS

Visakhapatnam:-I was stationed at Narsipatnam but travelled quite a lot over the district especially the ghats. But serious bird watching was confined to Visakhapatham proper, Narsipatnam, Koyyuru and the ghats around Chintapalle, Paderu and Anantagiri. There are so many interesting points that I wish to mention, that, instead of mixing them up, I had better godown the list of families and make comments whenever necessary.

Grebes:-Dabchicks nesting freely in August. It was interesting to read about the record of the Blacknecked Grebe in Dr.Pushp Kumar's checklist appearing in 'Mayura'.

Tropic Birds:-A Tropic Bird was of not infrequent occurence in May at Visakhapatnam. On 3.5.78 I saw three birds chasing each other with shrill cries just where the road from Caltex Colony reaches the beach. On 7/5 one bird flew close by the Sun-and-Sea Hotel. On 11/5, two, flying along the beach with the usual cussedness of things, I did not have any binoculars with me on any of these occasions, and during the many hours at various times of the day that I stood waiting with binoculars ready on the beach, non appeared! I could not see the upperside of the birds; but the tail streamers were definitely white, so that rules out the Red-tailed tropical bird. It must have been one of the other two species - I did not get the exact colour of the beak but I don't think it was dark red, in any case perhaps Orange or Yellow. Perhaps it was the yellow-billed tropic bird (white-tailed) Dr.Pushp Kumar in his list jumps directly from the grebes to the pelicans, so that is not a help either.

Herons:-Black Bittern at Narsipatnam, on the tank behind the Sub-Collector's Bungalow, in August and September. Flying about in late evening. Chestnut Bitterns (common) and Yellow Bittern (once) also on same tank.

Ducks:-Spotbills breeding in August on same tank mentioned above. Lesser Whistling Teal Common but no sign of breeding or pairing Cotton Teal Scarce, no Nukta.

Raptores:-The crested Serpent Eagle was the commonest eagle in the Ghats. Once eleven in air together near Anantagiri. Black Eagle fairly common, display and calling in August. Crested Hawk-Eagle fairly common. The Shikra was the only Accipiter; I searched in vain for the crested Goshawk or the Besra. White-eyed Buzzards upto the highest hills. Shahin Falcon at Paderu, once only, near the Inspection Bungalow. No sign of Bonellis Eagle, White-bellied Sea-Eagle, magnificient pair with one flying young, at Visakhapatnam harbour. Honey-buzzards, both in low country and the ghats. Short-toed Eagle in Araku Valley.

Contd...

Game Birds:-The local jungle fowl, I was surprised, is the Red Jungle Fowl, but then as I discovered from Vol.II of Dr.Salim Ali's Handbook, the boundary between the two species is the Godavari River. A spurfowl of undetermined species is also present. Only the Jungle Bush-quail as regards Quails, and Painted Partridge. Peafowl present but rather scarce.

Bustard Quails:-Only the common Bustard Quails, as far up as Paderu.

Rails:-Kora in the Narsipatnam tanks, males pugnacious and calling in August and September, freely coming into open Coot present there in August and September, very few.

Jacanas:-Pheasant tailed Jacana with young in August, Narsipatnam

Sandpipers etc:-Both Curlew and Whimbrel had arrived on Vizag coast by mid August. So also a sand-plover (species?). Curlew also inland, at Narsipatnam. Wood Sandpipers and Green Sandpipers by early August.

Terns:-A 'Sterna' tern (long forked tail) was common on Vizag coast in August. Size that of Indian River Tern or a little smaller. Very pale grey, black patch behind eye, long and slender black bill, black legs. Not the Gull-billed Tern with which I am familiar. It comes closest to the Black naped tern (S.sumatrana) which is most unlikely. I am truly foxed. Also a very large tern, brown above, with yellow bill; noisy, singly or pairs on coast. Probably the large crested tern, but I cannot be sure. Besides, my binoculars kept getting fogged by the sea spray, and I hardly had a clear view.

Pigeons:-The commonest green pigeon in the ghats was the Orange-brested Green Pigeon (T.bicincta) Common Green Pigeon (T.phoenicoptera) present, but scarce (once at Minnullur, feeding alongwith former, once at Chintapalle). Rufous Turtledove present, but very shy and wild, unlike Himalayan races (this is the red race S.O.agricola), Emerald dove common, but I failed to locate the green Imperial Pigeon.

Cuckoos:-The presence of the common Cuckoo was very interesting At Chintapalle, it was calling, but apparently not too common, in May and June. In June, three birds chasing each other calling "Kuk-koo...kuk-kuk-koo" in flight. Does Cuculus canorus breed in the Eastern Ghats? Even more surprising is that I only once heard the Indian Cuckoo (Cuculus microp terus), at Chintapalle. I would have expected this to be common. Other common cuckoos in the ghats in June-July were the Drongo-Cuckoo and plaintive cuckoo (both common) and the Bay-banded Cuckoo (scarce - once at Chintapalle, once Anantagiri). All three calling in july.

Owls:-Brown Fish Owl at Narsipatnam and near Chintapalle, Mottled wood-owl at Narsipatnam, which gave me a very beautiful view one evening when it emerged when the light was still good and got mobbed by crows in the bargain. Collared scops-Owl at

...ntd...

Narsipatnam and Barred Jungle Owlet at Koyyuru and K.D.Peta. I failed in my search for the Brown Wood-Owl and the Brown Hawk-Owl.

Nightjars:-Nightjars present but surprisingly silent from May to September (!) and so unidentified.

Trogans:-My prize discovery. Malabar Trogan, apparently scarce, once at Lamasinghi, once Chintapalle, both males. For a week I thought it the most beautiful bird in the world.

Bee-eaters:-Only relevant fact here is that I failed to locate the Blue-bearded Bee-eater, which is surprising, in spite of being familiar with this somewhat elusive species in U.P., and Assam.

Hornbills:-No grey hornbills! One and only one 'Anthracoceros' Pied Hornbill, not identified due to failure to study the tail, due to extreme excitement at discovery. I did not see it again, so it could not be too common. What is the horn bill in these ghats usually?

Woodpeckers:-Larger Golden Backed, Common Golden Backed, Lesser Yellow Naped Gree, Little Scaly Bellied Green, Rufous, Maratta, Indian Pygmy, fulvous breasted Pied - all common, except the Little Scaly-bellied which I saw only once, at Koyyuru. I had hopes of black-backed, and fainter hopes for heart-spotted, but neither turned up. Speckled piculets present, but apparently not very common, or perhaps I overlooked them.

Pittas:-I saw no pittas. Does the Indian Pitta breed here?

Parrots:-Lorikeet quite common throughout the ghats.

Drongoes:-Apart from the black and white bellied drongos, the Grey Drongo was present in the Ghats and fairly common throughout from May to September. Although I found no nests or evidence of nesting, surely they must breed here - otherwise how do we explain their relative abundance in summer? The Bronzed Drongo was another common breeding species. Very surprisingly, I did not come across the hair-crested or racket-tailed Drongos, both common and widespread species which should occur here!

Mynas:-Hill Mynas very shy and congregating in large flocks of over fifty birds in August.

Crows etc:-The Himalayan Tree-pie, a speciality of the area, showing its links with the Eastern Himalayas, was common around Paderu and Anantagiri. I did not see it at Chintapalle. At Minimullur above Paderu, large numbers had congregated in a fruiting fig tree, presumably for fruit?

Wood Shrikes, Minivets etc:-Black-headed cuckoo-shrikes only in the ghats, not in low country. Large wood-shrike (Tephrodornis gularis) fairly common, noisy. This is again indicative of the position of the Vizag ghats midway between the Western Ghats and the Eastern Himalayas. The scarlet minivet was common,

and so was the Rosy Minivet (Pericrocotus roseus). The call of this species "Chi-ri-ri-chi" is quite different from the melodius calls of the scarlet or the feeble notes of the Little Minivet. I saw a male feed birds in female plumage several times on more than one occasion he successively fed to birds in female plumage. Thus this is not likely to be courtship feeding, but rather feeding of full-fledged young. I myself an quite convinced that the Rosy Minivet breeds in the Vizag ghats. They were common throughout the ghats from May to September continuously.

Chloropses:-Gold fronted confined to Jungle on the ghats; Jerdan's Chlorpsis equally common in the ghats and in the low country.

Bulbuls:-The White-browed Bulbul does not seem to ascend the ghats at all. Even on the ghats, the Red-vented Bulbul is much commonest than the Red-whiskered. The only other Bulbul, the Black-crested yellow, was comparatively scarce, though I saw it in several widely spread localities in the ghats.

Babblers:-I must comment on the surprising scarcity of the peninsular scimitar Babbler. I saw it only at Minimullur. Perhaps it is my inexperience with this shy species that caused me to overlook it, though I have fared quite well with the closely related slaty-headed scimitar Babler in the Himalayan foothills. Other common Babblers were the Rufous bellied (not the race with the white throat), Yellow-eyed, spotted and Quaker Babblers. The Jungle Babbler was confined to the ghats (Chintapally only) Another interesting and fairly common Babbler was the Yellow-breasted (Macronous gularis) noisy, active little birds present in most of the hunting parties. A small intriguing Babbler at Minimullur that I tried to follow up but failed to get a decent glimpse may have been Red fronted Babbler (Stachyris rufifrous), which is supposed to be found here, but I cannot be at all sure.

Flycatchers:-The commonest species were the paradise, the Black naped blue the grey-headed flycatchers, the white-browed fantail and Tickells Blue flycatcher. I found nests of all these birds except the last. Slightly less common were the White Throated fantail (Rhipidura albicollis vernayi, with a buff abdomen) and the Brown flycatcher. The last is not recorded breeding in the Vizag ghats, but I saw it feeding young at Chintapalle in May It was present throughout, uptil September.

Wablers:-Nothing much to report, except that Greenish Tree-Warblers were present in the ghats from 20 August onwards.

Thrushes:-White-throated ground thrushes and southern black birds singing and breeding freely. Young of former in August, fully fledged but with scaled plumage. Shamas singing celestially through all the four months.

Tits:-Both grey and yellow checked, the lattern much commoner .

Nuthatches:-Both Chestnut bellied and velvet fronted Nuthatches were present in the ghats, about equally common. The latter are much noisier than the former.

Spiderhunters:-I tried my best to locate the Little Spider - Hunter, a bird I very much want to observe, and which is reputed to be found in the area, but failed.

Sparrows - Munias etc:-I must point out the presence and breeding of the black-breasted weaver bird in Narsipatnam Tank. The birds were common, moving about in flocks, and nesting freely in the reeds. Vol.10 of the Handbook does not mention Andhra in the range of the species, and the map on page 97 does not show the range of Ploceus bengalensis extending even into Orissa. I must note that the black-breasted weavers that I know in the gangetic plain have the entire throat and breast black in the breeding made; the Narsipatnam males had the throat whitish and a broad black band across the breast. Something like this also happens to the Baya in the southwest and North-east and in Burma. the dark throat vanishes. To compound matters still further, the picture of ploceus benghalensis in Vol.10, of the Handbook (Salim Ali), page 128, shows a breeding male with white throat and black breast - i.e., exactly like my Narsipatnam birds! will someone please explain? For the record, my birds were nesting in July and August.

The common munias in the ghats were the spotted and white backed; the Rufous-bellied munia (Lanchura kelaarti jerdani) was seen near Chintapalli in bajra fields in August. This is another Vizag ghats speciality, the rest of the population coming from South-west India. I did not see the green munia, allegedly found in these ghats, and something that I have always wanted to see. In the low country, the spotted munia was common; and Narsipatnam tank had a flock of about fifty black-headed munias. What is interesting is that perhaps forty of these were the white bellied southern race, the remaining were the chestnut bellied north-eastern race. In this content the footnote on page 118 of Vol.10 of the Handbook is pertinent. These birds showed no evidence of breeding.

So much worth talking about in four months of birdwatching! The above, as is obvious, is not an exhaustive checklist of the birds I saw in the district, its just a collection of comments on points that excited my fancy. The Visakhapatnam ghats (and the hills of Orissa) have always struck me as being an island linking the Eastern Himalayan with the Western ghats. So many species, the Lorikeet, The Speckled, The Large Wood Shrike, The Little Spiderhunter etc. are common to all three areas. Connections with the Eastern Himalayas are typified by the Himalayan Tree Pie, Fulvous breasted Pied Woodpecker, Red Fronted Babbler Brook's Flycatcher (which I failed to see, but is supposed to be present) and others. And links with the Western Ghats are shown by the Malabar Trogon, Rufous bellied Munia, etc. It is a region of tremendous natural beauty, and although much of the larger Wildlife has vanished, still some remains. In four months, I saw Gaur, Sambar and on three occasions Sloth Bear. The last is reputed to be especially common on the Araku - Anantagiri side. Also, on several occasions, barking Deer. I heard stories of a tiger near Sileru, and Leopards at other places. The Vizag ghats forests have fallen a victim to the insidious tribal cultivation system of Jhumming (Poddu). While

this did no harm, infact was probably even beneficial in some respects when the tribal population was low, now it has begun to show disastrous consequences in many areas, especially the Paderu - Araku region. The Forest Department has shown great ingenuity in introducing coffee in these hills and attempting to settle the wandering tribal populations in such estates. This would be a tremendous achievement if it works. Yet another danger to these forests is from the huge Bauxite deposits present in the area - some of the highest ranges, Sankarametta, Chapparla etc., are almost all bauxite. While no one can dispute the utilization of such grand deposits for India's benefit, I hope the authorities, and especially the Forest authorities will take all care to see that minimum ecological damage results from the operations. There has to be give and take on both sides.

One last question: I am surprised that I did not locate the Hair crested Drongo, the Racket tailed Drongo, the Green Imperial Pigeon, the Black backed Woodpecker etc., in these jungles. Are they not present here or did I miss them? The first three are relatively common species, and if they really are not present or very rare, there must be an ecological reason for this.

Also a query: Do the painted Bush Quail, either of the two commonest Malcohas, the Heart Spotted Woodpecker, the Besra and the Indian Crested Goshawk occur here? I am eagerly reading Dr. Pushp Kumar's checklist for these answers - but this is progressing slowly. In the meantime if anyone has any answers to these questions, I would be happy to correspond with him/her and discuss these points.

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SOME SPOTS EXCELLANT FOR WATCHING HIMALAYAN BIRDS

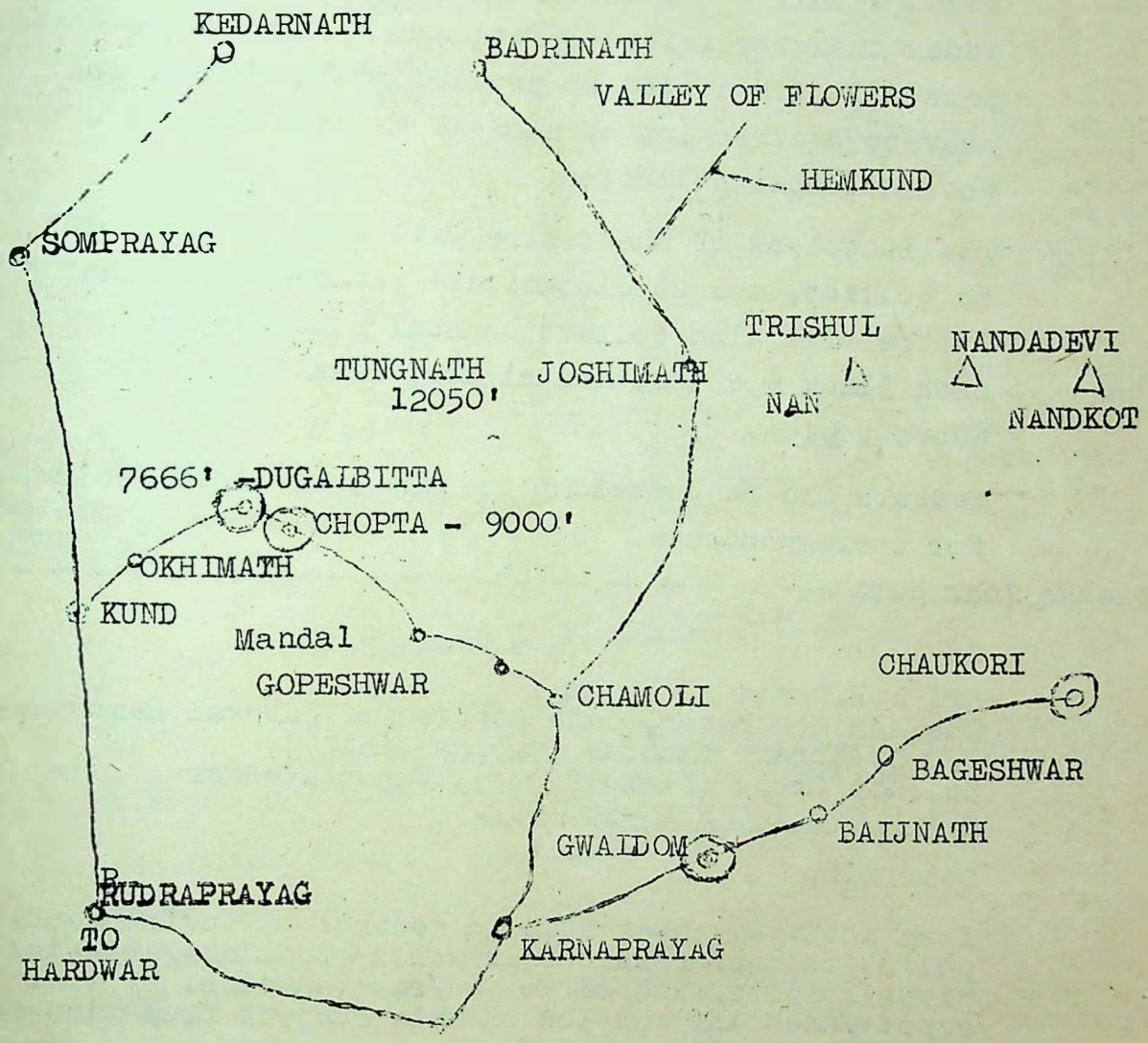
by

Sumant R. Shah

There must surely be some birdwatchers among piligrims to Kedarnath and Badrinath. The main body of pilgrims go by bus from Somprayag to Badrinath via Rudraprayag, being unaware of a shorter route (bus) via Kund, Okhinath, Dugalbitta, Chopta (Tungnath) Mandal, Gopeshwar, Chamoli. The only snag about this route is that it is very prone to minor landslides and the buses do not ply - without any prior notice - On a number of days between May and September. However during October and early November the area being free of landslides, the buses ply absolutely regularly. A bus starts from Somprayag at 5 A.M. sharp, reaching Okhinath At 07.00, Dugalbitta 08.00, Chopta 08.30 and Badrinath at 5 P.M. The stretch of about 50 Km. between Okhinath and Mandal is the densest and most beautiful forest - Not monoculture of chir and deodar - in the whole of India.

During October you will surely see about a dozen times family outings of Kalooj on the road even from the Bus - Front seat - But thebest way is to stay at Dugalbitta rest house - Write to district Magistrate (Chamoli Division) Gopeshwar-246401 (U.P.) for permit to stay - It is the most scenecally situated rest house in India. Walk along the road up or down. Besides

MAP SHOWING BIRDWATCHING SPOTS IN HIMALAYAS



DATA CENTRE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

WORLD WILDLIFE FUND - INDIA

Dear

Dear Sir,

I am happy to inform you that World Wildlife Fund-India has opened a Data Centre for Natural Resources, at Bangalore. The Centre will collect material about wildlife and their habitats, and suitably index them for reference and use by interested persons, with a view to promote conservation, and prevent destruction of habitat through control of environmental pollution.

The functions of the Centre will thus be two fold: to collect, and to disseminate information. The Centre will also collect unusual photographs, both black & white, and cllour, relating to the above topics.

Members are requested to use the tear-sheet (below) for correspondence.

Please Tear here ---

To

Sri J.E.David
The Administrator, Data Centre for Natural Resources,
C/o Dynacraft Machine Company Limited,
36, 7th Cross (First Floor), Vasanthanagar
B A N G A L O R E -560 052.

Dear Sir,

I am actively interested in control of environmental pollution and/or/in conservation of plants/animals/birds/insects/fish of common/rare species. I will supply/need information on this subject from time to time, and I will contact you.

Yours faithfully,

Name:

SIGNATURE.

Address:

Place :

Dated :

the three mentioned you will see a number of other Himalayan birds(White crested Kaleej, White Throated Laughing Thrush and Himalayan Blue Magpie both Yellow and Red billed. The October month is recommended because there will be very little piligrim traffic - For Tungnath, you will have to climb 3050 feet on foot from 9000' to 12050' in two and a half miles. But will be rewarded by other birds playing hide and seek among dwarf Rhododendrons. In this region of pine, Rhodendron, Deodar Forest interspersed with open glades and sheep and musk deer pastures you will see white crested kaleej, white throated, laughing thrushes and Himalayan blue magpies to your hearts content. My only regret was that inspite of being an ideal habitat for monal pheasant I never saw one, though some miles away in Panwali, Dopital, Pindari Glacier areas - one has to trek for couple of days - I saw a number of them.

The other easily accessible - by bus - spots, rich in bird life are (1) Chaukori - Write to Kamoun Mandal Vikas Nigam - For accommodation - The area around the ruins of a one time beautiful hut of a chaukori - berinagtea estate planter is superb for bird watching and the view of snow peaks of trishul, Nanddevi and Nandakot is matchless. A bus goes to the place from Kathgodam or Almora or Bageshwar.

2. Gwaldom - write to Garhwal mandal vikas nigam for accommodation. This place is superb for Himalayan blue Magpie and White Troated Laughing Thrush. Bus goes from Kathgodam or Almora. For one wanting to do research on Kaleej, Dugalbitta and Chopta would be ideal places.

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SOME BIRDS OF TIRUMALAI HILLS

by

Dr. A.Shiv Raj

During my visit to Tirumalai hills in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh I observed the following birds on Dec.28,1980.

1. Red vented bulbul - Pycnonotus cafer
2. Red whiskered bulbul- Pycnonotus jocosus
3. Yellow wagtail - Motacilla flava
4. Golden oriole - Oriolus oriolus
5. Green pigeon - Treron phoenicoptera
6. Indian roller or Blue jay - Coracias benghalensis

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SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF ANDHRA PRADESH - PART - IV

by

PUSHP KUMAR

Herons & Egrets:-Birds belonging to the Heron family (Ardeidae) including Herons, Egrets and Bitterns are well represented in the State with 13 species reported out of the 19 species listed for the region in the Handbook. These longnecked (with the characteristic kink in the middle which allows them to carry their neck retracted in the form of an 'S' when in flight) Long legged, with spearlike bill waders are found along most water courses. The congregations being longest and densest along the coastal waters especially Pulicat Lake, mouths of the Krishna and Godavari and along the coast to Srikakulam District. Egrets, (especially Little Egret (Egretta gargetta) and cattle egret (Bubulcus ibis) are conspicuously seen by most rural populations in many parts of the State due perhaps to their conspicuous white colour and gregarious habits! large congregations are often seen in the midst of Hyderabad city in the River Musi and other water courses feeding on an occasional fish but most on insects and worms! They thus play a very useful role in controlling the biological by-products of an ever growing human population!

All Herons, Egrets andStorks are termed "Konga" in Telugu with appropriate sufixes to denote size and colour! In Urdu the word "Bagla" is applicable like-wise to most small herons and egrets. Herons (Kongas) in local lore traditionally meditate ("Japam") on one foot but actually wait for the poor unwary fish to approach near before they pounce on it!

EASTERN GREY HERON: Ardea cinerea rectirostris Gould

Telugu: Narayana Pakshi: Urdu : Anjan

This grey and white lanky heron is found in most waters i.e., lakes, tanks, rivers, coastal waters throughout the State. It nests in large trees on the east coast. Especially around the Pulicat Lake. The season being November to March in the State.

EASTERN PURPLE HERON: Ardea purpurea manilensis Meyen:

Telugu: Yerra Narayana Pakshi : Urdu : Lan Anjan:

Like the Grey Heron (but more purplish with brownish neck and smaller size) found throughout the State in most inland waters, but unlike it not as commonly seen. It was a regular breeder im the Typha beds in the Sanctuary in the Hyderabad Zoo. The Typha is pulled together, tamped down into a platform and a depressed nest made. The young which look like the parents are well camouflaged as they stretch their lineqly lined necks when disturbed by a harring Marsh Harrier and merge with the Typha reeds! Through the reeds it was difficult to locate them except when a parent arrived back from Mir Alam Tank. Then there would be lot of jostling and vocalisation till the young were fed! This habit of freezing among

the reeds like a bittern was also exhibitted by the parents making it all the more difficult to locate the nest! Nests were not built too close but were well distributed (maximum number observed being 14) over the reed bed spread over an area of about 5 acres. The "Sanctuary" is now dry, the reed beds devastated and the Purple Herons no longer nest here. The price of "development" (?)

LITTLE GREEN HERON: Butoroides striatus chloriceps (Bonaparte)

Telugu : Dosi Konga: Urdu: Kanch Bagla:

This small black and grey paddy bird like heron is not commonly reported from most parts of state. This may be due partly to the fact that it look so much like the Pond Heron and is usually confused with it or overlooked. It is found occasionally along the Godavari River and its tributories as well as along the shores of number of small tanks and lakes like Lakshmapur, Kinnerasani and Tatipudi etc. It is most commonly seen in the Mangrove forests of Coringa in the mouths of the Godavari where it is flushed from the creek banks by the passage of launch. It flies a short distance to a point ahead and is flushed again! Often crouches in the reeds and allows the launch to pass! Not reported from the drier parts of Telangana and Rayalaseema.

INDIAN POND HERON or PADDY BIRD: Ardeola grayii grayii (Sykes)

Telugu: Guddi Konga : Urdu : Andha Bagla:

This small brown and white Heron is very common in the State and is found in the shores of small ponds and along most paddy fields in various stages of brown plumage, which suddenly turns white as the bird takes to flight. It is not clear why locally it is named the 'blind' Konga! Is it perhaps because its yellow eyes are well camouflaged in the striated plumage around them and are therefore notvisible or is it because of thehabit of pretending 'blindness' and pouncing on its unsuspecting pray, be it an insect, a frog or a fish.

CATTLE EGRET: Bubulcus ibis coromandus (Boddaert)

Telugu : Samti Konga: Urdu : Badami Bagla, Gai Bagla:

Found throughout the State in groups attending on the ubiquitous grazing cattle, walking unconcernedly between their legs, jumping on their backs, walking in front, often alongwith other attendants avian or human! In the breeding season (usually during rains and just after) the drab white bird puts on its nuptial cloak of golden-yellow and looks a different and handsome bird altogether! Feeds usually on insects like grass hoppers which are flushed from the grass as the cattle walks around and stirs them. May be seen in large groups alongwith Little Egrets in Hyderabad City feeding on insects

in the grass fields inundated by city sewage and thus performing a useful service to man. They roost on the large Raintrees and Banyans still left on the road margins, turning the green foliage white!

EASTERN LARGE EGRET: Egretta alba modesta (J.E.Gray)

Telugu: Pedda Tella Konga : Urdu : Bada Bagla:

This large white heron is found sporadically throughout the State especially in large tanks like Dindi, Pakhal, Shamirpet alongwith other waders which mop-up fish from muddy waters. Also along the coast in Pulicate Lake, and many salt pans. Numbers keep varying as the birds keep moving from tank to tank and River to River.

SMALLER OR MEDIAN EGRET: Egretta intermedia intermedia (Wagler)

Telugu: Tella Konga : Urdu: Safed Bagla, Manjhla Bagla:

Like the Large Egret. Seen in much larger numbers throughout the State in similar habits.

LITTLE EGRET: Egretta garzetta garzetta (Linnaeus)

Telugu: Chinna Tella Konda : Urdu : Chota Bagla:

Found extensively throughout the State in association with other herons, cormorants etc., It occurs in large groups at many ponds, streams, lakes etc. Nests colonially alongwith other birds like paddy birds, cattle egrets, cormorants, white ibis etc. A large colony of these herons, cattle egrets as well as median egrets is found in Pembarti village about 80 Kms. east of Hyderabad City. The birds occupy Neem, Babul and Tamarind trees in the court yard of houses! They are protected by the villagers especially the famous brass work makers! They also occupy Babul trees growing alongwith Cattle Egrets and Median Egrets along the puddles that are left of the River Musi in Hyderabad city, moving up and down according to the vagaries of the ubiquitous dhobis choice of the water where he wants to wash the city's dirt! They even snatch sustainance from the red and blue coloured polutted waters near Visakhapatnam.

INDIAN REEF HERON: Egretta gularis schistacea

(Hemprich and Ehrenberg)

Telugu: Theerapu Konga: Urdu: Kala Bagla

Found mostly along the East Coast from Pulicat Lake to Visakhapatnam, this dimorphic dark coloured or slaty heron of the size of a small Egret is an enigmatic bird. The Handbook mentions occurance mostly on the east coast and records as breeding east of Nellore and around Pulicat Lagoon. In Pulicat it is found quite commonly and regularly especially in the shallow waters near the causeway to Sriharikota island where 3 phases dark (black), slaty and as well as white have been noted. It is also found along the creeks in Mangrove forests of the Coringa Sanctuary in the Godavari Delta near Kakinada, sometimes in large numbers (Jan.28th 1981). A pair was also

observed in the illustrious company of Dr.Salim Ali, S.A. Hussain and the avid naturalist Krishna Raju in the salt pans at the Steel Plant site near Visakhapatnam on 10th Dec.1980 a drizzly yet exciting morning! A pair (slaty-blue phase) was also observed in the Narsapur Tank 50 Kms. north of Hyderabad City on 21st Dec.1980 in the company of A.P.Bird Watchers Club! It has also been observed in other peninsular tanks of Telengana (far from the sea coast) like Malkapur, Pocharam, Shamirpet etc. At Pindi on 8th Jan.1980 it was observed alongwith Grey Herons, Median and Large Egrets as well as Greater and Lesser Flamingoes. This suggests that the dispersed of this enigmatic bird may be more extensive than has been assumed by the Handbook. Its extended range and ecological requirements have to be further worked-out.

NIGHT HERON:Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax (Linnaeus)

Telugu: Chinta Wakha (?) Urdu: Waak Bagla:

This black and white paddy bird sized heron is found in most parts of the state especially in marsh lands with reed beds. However, the distribution is very patchy. Large congregations are usually heard (than seen!) at dusk with their characteristic call "Waak" uttered on the wing. They used to breed regularly in the redds in the sanctuary in the Hyderabad Zoo, where they would congregate in the evening from various directions. They no longer do so now.

CHESTNUT BITTERN:Ixobrychus cinnamomeus (Gmelin)

Telugu : Erra Wakha (?) Urdu : Lal Bagla

The chestnut colored plumage of this smaller than paddy bird heron is unmistakable, especially the male. This is reported from most reed beds and swamps. Pairs were breeding in the reed beds in the Hyderabad Zoo. The birds are secretive and flushed with difficulty. Also seen in public gardens and Indira Park below the Tank Bund. They are also seen in the Marsh below Pakhal Lake in Pakhal Sanctuary.

YELLOW BITTERN: Ixobrychus sinensis (Gmelin)

Telugu: Paspu Wakha (?) Urdu: Peela Bagla:

It is a predominantly yellow and brown bird with black wings in flight. Reported throughout the state but very patchily. Perhaps overlooked because of shy habit and marshy habit. A resident of the sanctuary in the Hyderabad Zoo. Crepuscular in habits and seen usually flying at sun down which is also a clue to its rarely seen status.

BITTERN: Botauris stellaris stellaris (Linnaeus)

Telugu : None recorded: Urdu : Baz (?)

This winter visitor has not been reported widely from the state. Generally overlooked because of its marsh habitat and habit of freezing with neck and bill outstretched towards the sky. The bird thus merges with the reeds and is difficult to locate. Flushed recently from the Coringa Creek in the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary (28th Jan.1981)

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Indeed

prasad*

BIRD WATCHERS' CLUB OF ANDHRA PRADESH,
Dept of Entomology,
College of Agriculture
Rajendranagar, Hyderabad

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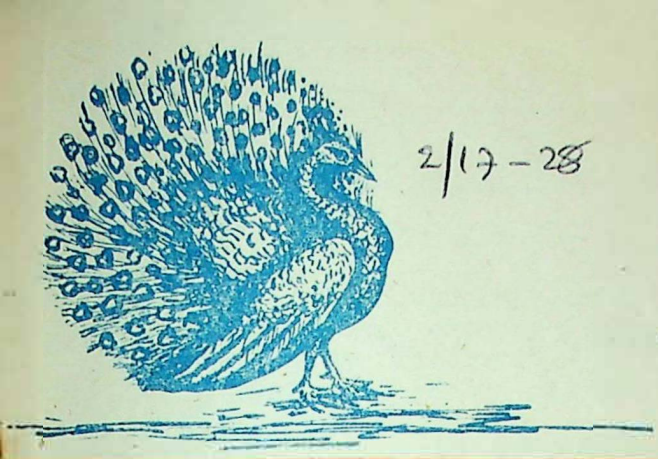

2/17-28

MAYURA

4 October 1981

Newsletter of the Bird Watchers' Club of Andhra Pradesh

Vol.II APRIL, 1981 No.2

A BIRDWATCHERS' PARADISE

Andhra Pradesh promises to be a birdwatchers paradise. In species diversity and number this state is unique in many respects. A variety of habitats such as Rock and scrub country, vast stretches of grasslands, thick forests, Eastern ghats, gardens, lakes and sea coast provide necessary environment for the birds to breed and multiply uninhibited.

The panorama for the birdwatcher here changes from one season to another. The coming of spring is heralded by the arrival of beautiful Paradise Flycatcher in March - April. Voices of such birds as Cuckoos, Ioras, and Orioles fill the air with their sweet musical notes and calls. Sun birds splash their colours while they hop from one flower to another seeking nectar. Pied crested Cuckoo a visitor from the West auger the onset of South-west monsoons. June - July prove to be congenial months for breeding of Orioles, Redvented Bulbuls, Hoopoe, Crows and Cuckoos. Cessation of rains in October brings-in winter migrants from far off lands--notably Ibises, Painted Storks, and Flamingoes, Nakta Ducks, Pochards, Bluewinged teals, Black and Brown headed, seagulls, Pale and Marsh Harriers, India pitta, White, Yellow and Grey wagtails, Rosy pastors, Blue Rock Thrushes, adding to the resident population of Phesant-tailed and Bronze-winged, Jacanas, Crimson-breasted and Green Barbets, Spotbills, Malabar Trogans, Pied Hornbills and Grey Pelicans to name a few, filling almost varied habitats.

Though birdwatchers may have to await a checklist suffice it to say that Hyderabad and its environs can alone boast of nearly about 200 species of birds. Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad can be a best starting point for watching birds. Why not discover it yourself. Bird-watchers club of Andhra Pradesh or Wildlife Wing of Forest Department will be, of course, too glad to help you in seeking pleasures of birdwatching in Andhra Pradesh.

CONTENT

	Page
A Birdwatchers' Paradise - Editorial	1
A checklist of birds observed at Agricultural University Campus in Madurai - Ranjit Daniel	3
Nesting of purple-rumped sunbird - G. Sudershan Rao	4
Nesting of Ashy Wren Warbler - V. Bhasker	4
Competition for Nest Occupation the Parakeet and the Owlet - A. Sita Rama Raju	6
Birds associated with grape Gardens around Hyderabad - S. Tej Kunar, A. Ranga Reddy and K.Lakshminarayana	8
Survey of the birds of Andhra Pradesh - V - Pushp Kumar.	10

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A Checklist of birds observed at Agricultural University Campus in Madurai

By Ranjit Daniel:

Agricultural College campus in Tamilnadu Agricultural University is situated 15 kms. away from Madurai city on the road to Trichy. It is a hot, dry, scrub covered, rocky region. The most striking feature is a vast stretch of rock fencing one of the boundaries of our campus. The natural vegetation comprises mostly Acacias & Pythecolobium trees, paddy fields, a few patches of sorghum, coconut palms, an orchard and various leguminous trees cover the rest of the campus. A tank is also there almost fully covered with reeds and other floating vegetation which, at present, is dry!

This campus shelters quite a good number of birds common & less common species. Of these I have identified around (40) forty species excluding the most common ones like the crows and the house sparrow.

1. Peafowls (Pavo cristatus)
2. Pariah kite (Milvus migrans)
3. Brahminy kite (Haliastur indus)
4. Black-winged kite (Elanus caeruleus)
5. Shikra (Accipiter badius)
6. Scavenger vulture (Neophron percnopterus)
7. Indian pond Heron (Ardeola grayii)
8. Cattle egret (Bubulcus ibis)
9. Little egret (Egretta garzetta)
10. Pheasant-tailed jacana (Hydrophasianus chirurgus)
11. Spotted owlet (Athene brama)
12. Barn owl (Tyto alba)
13. Pied crested cuckoo (Clamator jacobinus)
14. Indian koel (Eudynamys scolopacea)
15. Southern crow-pheasant/concal (Centropus sinensis)
16. White breasted king-fisher (Halcyon smyrnensis)
17. Common kingfisher (Alcedo atthis)
18. Pied kingfisher (Cerylo rudis)
19. Blue tailed bee-eater (Merops philippinus)
20. Indian Roller (Coracias benghalensis)
21. Hoopoe (Upupa epops)
22. Crimson breasted barbet (Megalaema haemacephala)
23. Golden-backed wood pecker (Dinopium benghalense)
24. Indian Pitta (Pitta brachyura)
25. Ashy crowned finch lark (Eremopteri grisea)
26. Golden Oriole (Oriolus oriolus)
27. Black drongo (Dicrurus adsimilis)
28. Ashy swallow-shrike (Artamus fuscus)
29. Common myna (Acridotheres tristis)
30. Brahminy myna (Sturnus pagodarum)
31. Tree pie (Dendrocitta vagabunda)
32. Yellow throated sparrow (Petronia xanthrocollis)
33. Black headed munia (Lunchura malacca)
34. Spotted munia (Louchura punctulata)
35. White throated munia (Louchura malabarica)
36. Baya (Ploceus philippinus)
37. White wagtail (Motacilla alba)
38. Grey wagtail (Motacilla caspica)
39. Pied wagtail (Motacilla maderaspatensis)
40. Indian Robin (Saxicoloides fulicata)

41. Jungle babbler (Turdoides striatus)
42. Paradise flycatcher (Terpsiphone paradisi)
43. Redvented bulbul (Pycnonotus cafer)
44. Spotted dove (Streptopelia chinensis)
45. Little brown dove (Streptopelia senegalensis)
46. Rose ringed parrot (Psittacula krameri)
47. Purple sun bird (Nectarinia asiatia)

Besides, I have come across a few other birds which I am not very sure about. Out of them Warriers, Yellowish leaf warbler, Indian plaintive cuckoo, one pipit species and a species of nightjar.

o-The juvenile lacking the white head and resembling the pariah kites.
+-With nest, low on Acacia, a ball of paddy straw and grasses with an entrance hole.
o o-Observed nesting during 1st week of March using an abandoned cob-web about 8 foot above ground level and making nest of it.

Nesting of Purplerumped Sunbird:
By G.Sudershan Rao:

A fully constructed nest of Purplerumped Sunbird (Nectarinia zelonica) was seen in March,1981 in the premises of PL-480 buildings of Ornithology scheme, Rajendranagar. The nest was attached to the tip of a branch of Bougainvillia tree, 5 feet above from the ground. Nest is pearshaped, composed of broken leaves, bark, a piece of moulted skin of snake, broken papers and other fibrous material glued together. The inner lining of the nest was matted with cotton like soft fibrous material and was seemed like a cushion. In the centre of the nest there was a round hole with a diameter of 3 cms. The length of the nest was 19 cms. with a width of 6 cms. in the middle and thickness of nest was 5 mm to 1 cm.

When the nest was examined on 2nd March,1981, two eggs were found. The eggs were grey with speck. They were incubated by female parent. As the date of egg laying was not known the incubation period could not be noted. Out of the two eggs one was hatched. The nestling was fed by both parents and on 16th day after hatching the nestling flew from the nest.

Nesting of Ashy Wren Warbler:
By [illegible], B.Sc., (Ag) III year, C.A. Rajendranagar:

Ashy Wren Warbler is a small, sparrow sized bird with a tiny beak, a protruding tail, and having a light brown colour on ventral side. The dorsal is ~~white~~ Grey

It is a very common to see the warblers in Rajendranagar campus which is located 2 kms. away from

Himayatsagar. One day I saw a warbler entering a jasmine bush and with curiosity, I too entered the bush and heard the bird screeching. As I went further, I saw the bird flying off.

There, I saw a nest beautifully woven in between the branches of Jasmine with grass and other fibrous material. The nest was at a height of about a meter above gournd and is 10-15 cm in length with an opening of 4 cm diameter. There were three eggs with a beautiful brick red colour. The broad end of eggs has a brick red ring and the colour faded towards narrower end. I observed the eggs on 24.6.80 and they were incubated by its mother during the next two days.

On 26th June, afternoon I observed 3 young deligate fleshy chicks in place of the eggs. They were having a small blackmass in place of their eyes. At the very moment, I saw another warbler prumably male bird was seen holding an insect and when the female bird heard the call it went off to receive the prey and conducted it to the young ones. Mostly the prey was to its chicks only through mother. The male bird used to wait for the female to feed the young ones. Once I observed that the male bird waited for about 10 minutes for the female in-order to receive the insect.

presumably

Both male and female birds went off from the nest so as to collect prey from the 3 rd day onwards. But on rainy days, when the day temperatures were less than 24°C the female remained in the nest to provide warmth to the chicks.

When the chicks are 10 days old, black hairs appeared on their head and the eyes were very well developed. The chicks used to wait for their mother with wide-open mouths, bordered with white long bony beaks.

From the 12th day, I saw three young warblers in a nearby Lantana bush. I could identify the young ones only with the help of a thread tied to one end of their legs, as marker. Now they were having a small tail and incomplete note. They remained in the bush for the next five days.

On the 20th day ie., on 17 th July the Warblers left off the Lantana bush and were seen flying here and there. They were spotted as eggs and left off as adults so as to perpetuate their life cycle.

Competition for Nest Occupation - The Parakeet and the Owlett.

By A. Sita Rama Raju:

On 10-2-81, we had been on a tour to Brahmana Cheruvu 10 kms. away from Maruteru, on the Western side. I myself accompanied with a mazdoor for checking the nests of parakeets.

We reached at one dead palmyra nest at 9.30 A.M. The same nest was used by parakeets in the previous breeding seasons. I asked the boy to climb up the tree to find out the eggs and the boy climbed up. As soon as the boy reached the top of the nest one owl has come out and flew away. The nest is about 8 feed high. No eggs were found in the nest. As soon as the owl went out the parakeets gathered to occupy the nest.

I found that six female parakeets were quarrelling for the same nest. Amongthem one could drive-out all and sat at the top of the nest. No male parakeet is found nearly the nest. The males might have gone to fetch food for their mates.

We sat nearer to the nest observing it for about 30 minutes(i.e. from 9:40 am to 10:00 a.m.). During this period, the female who dominated drove away all other females, which approached the nest.

At 10.00 a.m., we just moved out from the nest to a far off distance i.e., 13 mts. for observing the parakeet behaviour.

As soon as we moved far,an owl came and drove-out the parakeet, which sat on the top of the nest. The parakeet could not resist the force of the owl (Spotted owlett, Athena brama (Torumanek) so it moved aside. The owl did not enter into the nest, but sat on the nearby coconut tree.

10.00 A.M. : Parakeet (female) came and sat on the top of the nest but the owl drove it.

10.03A.M. : The owl came and sat, flew away to the nearby coconut tree.

10.05 A.M. : Parakeet F. came and sat, the owl again drove it.

10.06 A.M. : Parakeet F. sat and the owl drove it.

10.06 A.M. to 10.10 A.M. : Thw owl sat on the top of the nest and flew away to the coconut tree

10.11 A.M. to 10.15 A.M. : Parakeet sat and the owl drove it

10.15 A.M. to 10.17 : The owl sat and flew away to the coconut tree

10.17 A.M. to 10.24 A.M. : Neither the owl nor the parakeet came to occupy.

10.24 A.M. : Parakeet P sat.

10.25 A.M. : The owl drove out the parakeet.

10.25 A.M. to 10.32 A.M. : Neither the owl nor the parakeet occupied the nest.

10.32 A.M. to 10.35 A.M. : Parakeet P sat.

10.35 A.M. : The owl came and drove out the parakeet.

10.36 A.M. : The owl flew on to the coconut tree.

10.37 A.M. : The parakeet P sat and the owl drove it.

10.37 A.M. to 10.43 A.M. : Owl sat on the nest, and flew on to the coconut tree.

10.43 A.M. to 10.45 A.M. : Neither the parakeet nor the owl occupied the nest.

10.45 A.M. : Parakeet P sat.

10.47 A.M. : Owl came and drove the parakeet.

10.47 A.M. to 11.00 A.M. : Owl occupied the nest and flew on to the coconut tree.

11.00 A.M. to 11.04 A.M. : No bird came to occupy.

11.04 A.M. : Parakeet P sat and the owl drove it.

11.05 A.M. to 11.15 A.M. : No bird came to occupy the nest.

11.15 A.M. to 11.17 A.M. : Parakeet sat and the owl drove it.

11.17 A.M. : The owl ultimately occupied the nest and went inside of the nest.

The competition for nest selection between the owls and the parakeets will always be found, because the breeding period of both the birds is more or less the same. The breeding period of owls coincides with the breeding period of parakeets.

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The other birds observed are the golden backed woodpecker (Dinopium benghalense) (Linnaeus) came at 11.05 searching to make a hole below the original nest

at about 5 ft below. The woodpecker has been noticed to dig a hole with [illegible] beak. The tut - tut - tut - tut voice is heard upto 1½ kms. distance from the tree. It uses both the mandibles right [illegible] to dig the hole (wood pecker) to dig the hole. The hole was started at 11.20 A.M. and both the birds left the place at 1 .25 A.M. without making a clear hole.'

The other birds found are the black drongo or king crow Dicrurus adsimilis (Bechstein) and the fly-catchers were found feeding on the insects and flies from the paddy fields.

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Birds associated with Grape Gardens around Hyderabad:
By S.Tej Kumar, A.Ranga Reddy and K.Lakshminarayana:

Grapevine is extensively grown around the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad over an area of 1,000 ha. They have spread over scrub and fallow lands.

During February, March, 1981, when the grape was in crop observations were made to establish the birds associated with the grape crop in two gardens, A.P.A.U. Grape Research Station and Chandra Grape Garden situated nearby frequent visits. The following birds were noticed in these two gardens.

Sl. No.	Name of the Bird	Remarks
1.	Purple Sunbird	: Resident, found singly, Frugivorous and found to feed on berries by puncturing them and sucking sap which cause secondary infection of fungus sometimes.
2.	Purple Rumped Sunbird	: -do- -do-
3.	Common Myna	: Resident, Predominant and found in groups of 6 to 8. These birds were found ~~to feed on berries~~ were found to feed on berries in bunches.
4.	Brahminy Myna	: -do- -do-
5.	House Crow	: Found singly or in groups of 2-3. They pick-up berries.
6.	Roseringed parakeet	: Found in groups of 15-20. They cut and carry away berries for feeding elsewhere.

Sl. No.	Name of the bird	Remarks
7.	Golden Oriole	: Seen occasionally and feed on berries
8.	Common Iora	: Seen singly and insectivorous
9.	Redvented bulbul	: Seen singly. Frugivorous and also insectivorous
10.	White throated munia	: Seen in small groups of 4-6. Seed eating and no damage to grape
11.	Indian Robin	: Seen singly and insectivorous
12.	House sparrow	: Resident, found in groups of 8-10. Seed eating and insectivorous
13.	Common greenBee eater	: Insectivorous
14.	Singing Bush Lark	: Resident, found singly and insectivorous
15.	Red Start	: Migrant; found singly, and found to search on the ground for insects
16.	Brown shrike	: -do- -do-
17.	Rufous backed shrike	: Resident; found singly and found to reach on ground for insects.
18.	Tailor Bird	: -do- -do-
19.	Little Brown Dove	: Resident; found singly, seed eating did not cause any damage to grape berries
20.	Babbler (P)	: Resident; found in groups. Mostly insectivorous
21.	Bay backed shrike	: Resident; found in groups and insectivorous
22.	Common wood shrike	: Migrant; found singly and insectivorous

Of the 22 species of birds found associated with the grape orchards majority of the species were either beneficial or did not cause any damage to grape bunches. However some of them namely purple and purple rumped sun-birds, common mynas and house crows have been noted to become pests on grapes especially during crop season due to their frugivorous habits. Among them sun birds were found to cause fairly heavy damage to grape berries. Earlier literature perused did not indicate sun bird as an avian pest of grapes.

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SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF ANDHRA PRADESH - V
BY PUSHP KUMAR:

Storks:-Ciconiidae: These large, long legged mainly white and black marsh birds with a massive bill, which they often use for clattering (being "voiceless"), usually seen soaring high on thermals with out stretched wings and necks, are well represented in the State. Out of 8 species (9) forms listed for the Indian sub-continent, 7 species (7 forms) are reported in the State. Of these at least 3 species breed within our limits. One species is a migrant (white stork) (Ciconia ciconia) For breeding storks two things are essential. The presence of a wetland (marsh, lakes, tanks, back waters etc.,) with an abundant supply of food (fish, frogs, crustaceans, molluses etc.) and large trees nearby on which to construct their large nests of straw, twigs and other materials. Wetlands (marshes, natural shallow lakes, backwaters) are now under pressure of "reclamation" for which many drainage schemes are being formulated. Some are already taken-up. Besides this the lakes and reservoirs are being increasingly exploited for their margins and shallows so essential for the storks and other wading birds are being subjected to increasing disturbance. Due to increasing demand for fuel, large trees in villages and fields even Tamarind are being felled to feed the hearths of cities. This poses a grave threat to the storks, which should be considered threatened throughout the State. There are exceptions like Telineelapuram and Nelapattu (see below), where the commensurateness of storks with humans is amply demonstrated. One cannot but wonder, when the marshes and trees are gone where will the storks go?

PAINTED STORK: Ibis leucocephalus (pennant):

Telugu . .: Yeru Kata Konga, Kanapukonga, Urdu: Dhok

The most commonly found stork through-out the state. A few birds seen perched on the rock islands in the Osmansagar near Hyderabad city also in Dindi Reservoir, Pocharam Reservoir, Manjira, Pakhal and along the Godavari. They are also found in the well watered tracts along the coast from Srikakulam District to Nellore District. In Telineelapuram village near Tekkali in Srikakulam Dist. a mixed colony of painted storks and spotted billed pelicans (Pelicanus philippensis) exists right in the midst of the village. The storks nest on Tamarind, Neem and Acacia trees which grow in the courtyards of the villagers. The villagers give complete protection to the birds. The nesting period ~~xxxx~~ lasts from Nov. to March in this colony. Small colonies also exist near Vijayawada, Tanguturu etc.

OPEN BILL STORK: Anastomus oscitans (Boddaert)

Telugu : Galu konga, Terripimukku Konga, Natha Kollu
Urdu : Gungla, Ghungil

This small stork with its peculiar long-like bill is found in most parts of the State. A large colony was located near Ganapavaram in West Godavari Dist. some years back. They colonise Pakhal (Sanctuary) where they can be seen commuting between the lake and the Paddy fields outside the sanctuary. In 1980 (March) a large congregation was observed on the shores of the Ibrahimpatnam tank. The birds were also observed one season, roosting in the evening on the Banyan trees in paddy fields below the bund. The next season the trees were found cut and the birds were not seen thereafter. In December,1979 a large congregation was observed by the Bird Watcher's Club descending on the fast depleting Shamirpet lake. Large numbers were observed in Jan.to April,1981 on the mudflats of the depleted Dindi Reservoir. Small parties are seen on various waters. The stork nests communally with egrets, cormorants, white ibis etc., in the Nelapattu Sanctuary in Nellore District. This stork is found quite widely in the State, yet its local seasonal movements are not well known.

WHITENECKED STORK: Ciconia episcopus episcopus (Boddaert)

Telegu: Nalla Konga (?) Urdu : Laglag, Kali.

This small stork is found widely distributed in the State. It is report from Himayatsagar near Hyderabad, Shamirpet, Manjira, Mannanur plateau (720 M), Dindi Reservoir, Nellore District, Nelapattu, Srikakulam District. It used to visit the Nehru Zoological Park regularly about 6 years back where pinioned and white necked storks ~~xxxxxx~~ released in the maidan enclosure would act as decoys. It was also observed near Anantapur, Pakhal Sanctuary etc., It is often also seen in fields near reservoirs eg., Dindi and Mannanur. Also in muddy streams leading to such reservoirs. It is seen only in small parties.

WHITE STORK: Ciconia ciconia ciconia (Linnaeus)

Telugu: Wadumi Konga, Tella Konga : Urdu : Laglag, Ujli

The white stork is not found commonly in the State. It is a migrant which arrives around November and is seen upto March. One White Stork was recovered in Kurnool District near Bangarupalli in 1979. It had a ring on its left leg with the legend, "Department of Environment, Teheran". This was duly informed to the Director of Environment, Tcheran and B.N.H.S. Two white storks were also seen on the shores of Dindi Reservoir in Feb.81

They were seen till April,1981 in the company of Open bill storks, egrets, flamingoes etc.,

BLACKNECKED STORK: Xenorhynchus asiaticus asiaticus (Latham)

Telugu: Pedda Nalla Konga : Urdu: Loha Sarang (?)

This beautiful stork is not common in the State. It is reported only from eastern parts i.e., Srikakulam and Vizianagaram Districts. Reports from other areas are not confirmed.

ADJUTANT STORK: Leptoptilos dubius (Gmelin)

Telugu: Peenigala Konga, Beggaru Konga : Urdu:Hargila, Dusta:

Reported rarely only from the Eastern Districts, chiefly Srikakulam District.

LESSER ADJUTANT:Leptoptilos javanicus (Horsfield)

Telugu: Dodal Konga, Chinna Beggaru Konga:

Urdu :

Reported a little more extensively from Srikakulam Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts. But nowhere it is common.

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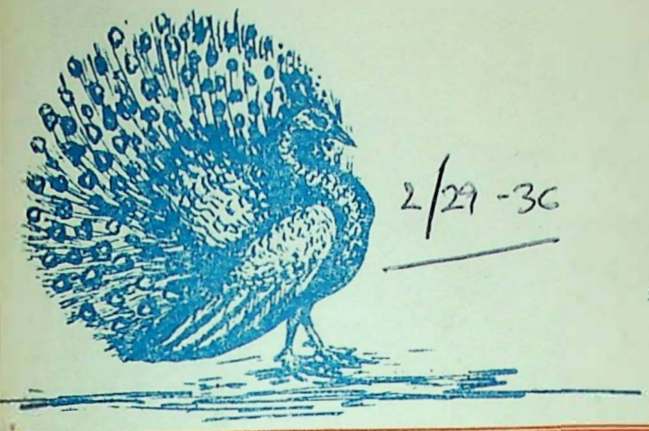
prasad*



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MAYURA

Newsletter of the Bird Watchers' Club of Andhra Pradesh

14 Mar 1982

Vol. II J U L Y, 1981 No. 3

BIRD-WATCHERS : WATCH OUT !!

It is not generally realised that bird-watchers are themselves watched. An incautious inspection of a nest can often result in casualties among nests, eggs and young. Two of the most curious creatures are young boys and crows. As soon as one walks away from the bush, one of these descends upon it and the damage is done.

If inspite of my precuations, I find that I have been spotted by one of these pests, I pretend to lose all interest in the bush and show greater interest in several other bushes in which there are no nests. This gives the impression that I am merely serching and does not pin-point the particular bush. Watching boys seldom give any intimation of their interest, but a crow usually gives a loud 'caw' to its Machiavellian companions that food has been found.

Common sense would suggest other precautions when studying a nest, chief among which are that a bird should not be frightened to the extent that it abandons the nest, that it should not be kept away from the nest for a long period, that no 'gardening' should be done thus leaving the nest exposed to predators.

-- O. C. EDWARDS

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C O N T E N T S

* Bird-watchers : Watch out ! 1

* Comments : Guddi Konga ' 2
- O.C. Edwards.

* Notes on the nesting of Indian Robin 3
- Dr. Udyan Mehta

* Bird-watching between four walls - I 4
- Md. Ali Khan

* The effect of solar eclipse on Parakeets and 5
and other birds on 16-2-1980 in Maruteru,
West Godavari Dist. A.P.
- A. Sitarama Raju

* Birds of Nizamabad and Nasik 6
- V. Bhaskar

* Survey of Birds of Andhra Pradesh - V 6

Comments : GUDDI KONGA.: by O.C. Edwards

Sri. Pushp Kumar in his very interesting and instructive information about the Birds of the Andhra Pradesh wonders why the Pond Heron or Paddy Bird should be called in Telugu 'Guddi Konga'. I venture to think that the name is a transferred epithet. When the bird rises and is in flight it a blaze of white, but when it alights, whether on a lotus leaf or in a paddy field, so fine is its camouflage that it is extremely difficult to make out; it seems to have vanished and so, it is not the eyes of the konga that are guddi but our own eyes. (Guddi means blind).

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For contributing articles to MAYURA and membership of the club please address Dr. S. Tej Kumar, Convenor, BirdWatchers' club of Andhra Pradesh, Department of Entomology, College of Agriculture, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, HYDERABAD-500030.A.P.

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---- Edited by Dr. S. Tej Kumar.

- 30 -

NOTES ON THE NESTING OF INDIAN ROBIN - BY DR. UDYAN MEHTA U

Three years ago a pair of Indian Robin (Sazcicoloides pulicata - Family Muscicapidae) was peeping in my house from a front window in search of a nesting site. Situation of the place was convinient. Front side's open space is full of trees - Asopaly, Saru and small plants. South side is covered with asopalv. West side space is full of closely grown trees - Asopalav, Almond, Gulmohor, Pomegranates Neem etc. North side is huge space of Muncipal Garden. Robin's selection was proper place, safe from predators and close vicinity of food, 1.60 meters above the ground, deep between the projection of a wall and the window on a firm base of grill where it had built a nest three years before. Since then it is laying and hatching eggs successfully there till today.

Robin breeds here, in the end of June every year prior to onset of monsoon. Ahmedabad is 55 meters above sea level on 72.5 E longitude and 23 N latitude. Climate is not and dry. Monsoon, sets in, in late June or early July.

Robin was frequently visiting its nest in mid March this year, a time too early for its breeding. On 23rd March I saw the female sitting in its nest. There were three eggs, an unusual time for its breeing.

I referred weather chart. During the month of March, 1981, relative humidity remained low approximately around 40%. But sky remains cloudy on 4th, 10th, 13th, 14th, 17th and 19th March. Tornado hit dacca on 14th March. On 13th there was rain in Saurashtra and Hyderabad. On 19th there was 1.8 m.m. rain in Ahmedabad.

The change in climatic vicissitudes looked like on set of monsoon. Physical Research Laboratory forcasted early on set of monsoon in Ahmedabad. It seems that due to these visible climate changes, Robin was INDUCED TO LAY EGGS. Out of three, two eggs were hatched on 2nd April,1981 and a third on 3rd April,1981. During April,1981 weather became dry and hot. Sky remained clear and relative humidity very low. All the three young ones died one after another after 17th April,1981.

Till 18th May,1981 relative humidity remained around 30% from 19th relative humidity increased to 70%. Sky remained clear. There was no rain but R.H. remained high (about 70%). From 25th May Robin started visiting its nest frequently. On 7th June,1981 two eggs were found. Third was laid on 8th June on 17th June one and on 18th June 2nd egg disappeared. I was unable to trace out any clue of missing eggs, it has remained an enigma, to me. The third egg was hatched on 18th June. Bird flew away on 2nd July.

After 11 days the egg hatched and after 16 days the bird took to its wings.

From these observations inference can be drawn, that Robin;

(1) Breeds prior to onset of monsoon

(2) Its predicts onset of monsoon by visual signs like rain and cloudy days and wind.

(3) It also predicts monsoon from change in its relative humidity.

If these observations are confirmed by the similar observations from different parts of the country a definite conclusion can be arrived at.

During this second breeding in this season only one young was reared up. On 1st July,1981 I counted sorties made by female and male to feed one young bird. Male did 28 and female 66, total 94. Most of the feeding was done in the early part of the day. Male did not turn up after 4 p.m. Chart is given below:

1st July,1981 Sunrise 5.55 Sunset 7.30
Max.Temp.35.4, Min.26, R.H.69% 2 mm rain.

Time	Sorties by Male	Sorties by Female
6 A.M. to 9 A.M.	5	21
9 A.M. to 10.30 A.M.	4	6
10.30 A.M. to 11.30 A.M.	3	4
11.30 A.M. to 12.45 P.M.	3	6
12.45 P.M. to 1.35 P.M.	6	7
1.45 P.M. to 2.45 P.M.	3	5
2.45 P.M. to 4.45 P.M.	4	6
4.45 P.M. to 6 P.M.	-	2
6 P.M. to 7 P.M.	-	6
7 P.M. to 7.30 P.M.	-	3
	28	66

Total 94.

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BIRD WATCHING BETWEEN FOUR WALLS-I - BY MD.ALI KHAN

I am a chronic bird lover and a naturalist. It had been my hobby to study and acquaint myself with the ecology of the birds. I would like to share my experiences on bird watching with you. My house is located in the heart of old city of Hyderabad, a kilometre south east of internationally famed Charminar. Being an old city area, you seldom find the greenery in and around my house. Having a little attachment with horticulture, I have covered the high compound walls of my house with attractive and drought resistant creepers like Boudainvilla, Bignonia Vinista, Clerodendron and a small lawn laid down in the centre of the open yeard. It may astonish you, that under these adverse conditions for the visit of the birds, I have very closely observed twenty seven (27) species of birds that have visited my house during last one year. The observations had been made by me in my leisure daily routine. The following are the birds observed.

ALL

1. Spotted dove - Pair - Streptopelia chinensis - daily
2. Tailor Bird - Orthotomus sutorius - Often
3. Sparrow Hawk - Accipiter Virgatus - Once
4. Red Vented Bulbul - Pair - Pycnonotus cafer - Often
5. House Crow - Corvus splendens - daily
6. House Sparrow - passer domesticus - daily
7. Ashy Wren Warbler - Prinia socialis - often
8. Brahmini Myna - or black headed Myna - Sturnus pagodarum (in rainy season)
9. Indian Myna - Acridotheres tristis (in rainy season)
10. Hoopoe - Upupa epops - once
11. Common Indian Night Jar - Caprimulgus asiaticus - once
12. Crimson breasted Barbet - Megalaima haemacephala - often
13. Olivacious leaf Warbler - pair ? Nov.to Feb.1982
14. Purple Sun Bird - pair - Nectarinia asiatica - often
15. Purple rumped sun Bird - Nectarinia zeylonica - often
16. Little Brown Dove - Streptopelia senegalensis - once
17. Common pariah Kite - Milvous migrans - often
18. Koel - Eudynamys scalopacea-(in summer)
19. Indian Robin - pair - Saxicoloides pulicata - daily
20. Pied Bush Chat - pair - Saxicola caprata - (few times)
21. Tickell's flower pecker - Dicaeum erythrohynchos - once
22. Black Drongo - King crow - Dicrurus adsimilis - often
23. White Vagtail - Motacilla alba - (few times)
24. Blue Rock Pigeon - Columba livia - often
25. Rose ringed parakeet - Psittacula Krameri (in rainy season)
26. Small Blue King Fisher - Alcedo atthis - once
27. White throated Munia - Lonchura malabarica - often
28. Spotted Munia - Lochura punctulata (in rainy season)

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THE EFFECT OF SOLAR ECLIPSE ON PARAKEETS AND OTHER BIRDS ON 16.2.1980 IN [illegible],WEST GODAVARI DIST.-A.P.

BY A. SITARAM MOHAN:

The parakeets (Psittacula krameri) Scopoli) the house crows (Corvus splendens, (Vieillot) were found returning to their nests. The birds were noticed making confusing noises. The parakeets were found returning to the nests at 3.40 P.M. to 3.50 P.M. and were making much noise. All the parakeets gathered on to their roostings on the Enterolobium saman trees and palmyra trees. The sounds of parakeets on solar eclipse day (16.2.1980) were recorded with the held of a tape recorder. The difference of noise can be clearly identified from the regular noise of the parakeets and the noise heard on the solar eclipse day. (The sounds of parakeets are still with me, and can be heard at any time for notification)

The parakeets and crows were again observed to go out for feeding. The birds seem to be confused with the solar eclipse changes. The parakeets returned to their roostings the crows returned making noises to their nests, the sparrows were found gathered on to a tree. The nocturnal birds like the owls had come out of the nests.

The solar eclipse appeared beautiful. A small dot like black patch has started covering the sun at about 2.30 P.M. The black dot patch has increased in size gradually. The temperature was also gradually started decreasing. About 85% of the sun had been covered by the eclipse at about 3.46 P.M. and remained up to 3.48 P.M. (i.e.,only 2 minutes)

The temperature at 5.46 P.M. to 5.48 P.M. has considerably decreased and resembled the shade of sun setting. The colour of the sun shine was light crimson red. There was gradual increase of sunshine after the eclipse is completed. There must be certainly some physiological changes in birds to recognise and react to such phenomena.

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BIRDS OF NIZAMABAD AND NASIK - BY V. BHASKAR.

During June-July,1981 the following birds were seen at Nizamabad, Andhra Pradesh.

1. Cattle egret
2. Little egret
3. Red Wattled lapwing
4. Yellow Wattled lapwing
5. Rose Ringed Parakeets
6. Moor hens
7. Spotted Munia
8. Pied Wagtails
9. Common Myna
10. Blue Kingfisher
11. Tailor Bird
12. Ashy Wren
13. Crow Pheasant
14. Malabar Pied Hornbill

During the same months (June and July,1981) the following birds were watched by me at Nasik and Triumbak (birth place of River Godavari)

1. Bank Myna
2. Hill Myna
3. Common Babbler
4. Large Grey Babbler
5. Shaheen falcon
6. Red wattled lapwing
7. Yellow Wattled lapwing
8. Koel
9. Crow pheasant
10. Blue jay
11. Gety Tit

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SURVEY OF THE BIRDS OF ANDHRA PRADESH - V

BY

PUSHP KUMAR

IBISES & SPOONBILLS - Threskiornithidae: These moderate sized stork like birds, with long legs and black glossy or white plumages, and specialist long bills either decurved as in the Ibises or spatulate as in the Spoonbill are well represented in Andhra Pradesh. Of the 28 species of this family found the world over, 4 species are reported in the Indian Sub-Continent. All the 3 species of Ibis that occur in the Indian Sub-Continent are reported in the State. The only species of spoonbill occurring in the Sub-Continent is also represented well in the State.

WHITE IBIS: Threskiornis melanocephala (Latham)

Telugu - Tella Kankanam, Urdu - Safed Baz - Ujli (?)

The White Ibis with its black head and bill is found practically throughout the State. Its habitat being large tanks or reservoirs and river banks, especially drying tank beds with mud flats in which the reason and utility of its peculiarly shaped bill becomes evident. Small parties alongwith storks (White necked, Openbill, Painted) in shallow waters from the Godavari River, Pocharam Reservoir, Manjira, Osmansagar, Malkapur, Pakhal, Dindi, Nagarjunasagar, South to Nelapattu, Pulicat, Penilicherla, East to Vizag and Srikakulam Districts (Banra) etc. It nests on Baringtonia trees in Nelapattu, Kondapalli etc., in mixed heronries with Openbills, Cormorants etc., during July - August. The seasonal variation in numbers is not well understood.

INDIAN BLACK IBIS: Psendibis papillosa papillosa (Temminck)

Telugu - Nalla Kankambaram - Urdu - Kala Baz, Kali.

The Black Ibis with its black plumage, white wing patches the "red cap" and down curved black bill is found enigmatically over the entire state. Its habitat is usually banks of Reservoirs and Rivers as well as fallow fields where groups can be seen probing into the upturned earth in search of insects, frogs and other small animals etc., presumably. The groups are never large. A group of 10 was seen foraging on the shores of Rushula Cheru Tank in Nagarjunasagar-Srisailam Sanctuary near Achampet, On 26th Feb.1982, and a pair was observed on shores of Lakshmapur Tank on the Amarabad plateau next day. Disturbed the pair flew crying around the tank and settled on Holoptelea tree. The vocalisations resembled the call of a Hawk as well as those of Ruddy Sheldrake. Pairs have also been observed at Pulicat, Nelapattu, Kondakarla Ava, along the Godavari River near Lanjamadugu Sanctuary, Dindi (actually small tank south of Dindi) in freshly cut paddy fields, and a number of other locations.

GLOSSY IBIS: Plegadis falcinellus falcinellus (Linnaeas)

Telugu - That Kankanam, Yerra Kankanam, Urdu - Chota Baz

A more reddish and smaller version of the Black Ibis with a slenderer and shorter down curved bill, lacking the white wing patch as well as the "Red cap", the Glossy Ibis is not common in the State. Small parties of 8 to 10 reported from Adilabad, Nizamabad as well as Srikakulam Dists. Observed only twice. Once a party of 5 on the wing and on another occasion 3 birds near Pocharam Lake. Possibly more commoner. No record of breeding in Andhra Pradesh.

SPOONBILL: Platalea leucorodia major Temminck & Schlegel

Telugu - Gantamukku Konga, Chamchamukku Konga, Teddumukku Konga:- Urdu - Chamcha Baz, Chamcha.

This interesting snowwhite bird with its peculiar spatulate bill is found throughout the state in lakes, reservoirs, wading in and shifting the mud and shallow waters of the foreshores. It is reported from Nizamsabar, Pocharam to Pakhal, Dindi, Pulicat, Nelapattu, Edurajpatlapalem and Bamva in the East. Large numbers however are not seen. A breeding colony of these birds is reported from Edurajpatla palem in Nellore District where it nests alongwith Grey Herons, Egrets, Cormorants, White Ibis etc.

FLAMINGOES: PHOENICOPTERIDAE: These tall long legged stork like birds with their long slender curved necks ending in club like shapply down curved lamellate bills are distinctive with light plumage which bursts into flame (hence the flamingo?) as the birds spread their wings and rise, are well represented in the state. Of the 6 species recognised world wide, 2 are reported from the Indian Sub-Continent. Both occur in Andhra Pradesh.

FLAMINGO: Phoenicopterus roseus Pallas

Telugu : Samudrapu Konga, Samudrapu Chiluka,
Urdu : Rajhans, Boghans

. This large bird has been known all along the East Coast for years. Especially along the mouths of the Godavari, Upputeru, Krishna and in Pulicat Lake where large congregations of flamingoes gather from about December to April each year probing and sieving the shallow brackish waters with their bill held upside down, presenting a peculiar "tripod" effect. The entire flock of "tripods" moves along in formation working the shallow water and mud with their shuffling legs, their upside vision enabling them remarkably to maintain distance! No breeding colonies ~~are reported in India~~ however presence of birds in juvenile of the Flamingo outside the Rann of Kutch are reported in India. However, presence of birds in juvenile plumage (grey) is also reported from Pulicat and other locations. The occurance of Flamingoes, on inland waters between the Rann ~~of~~ and the East Coast was not well known nor the route taken by such large numbers to reach their wintering grounds. In 1973 a flock of flamingoes were observed on the receding waters of the Pocharam Lake about 20 kilometers north of Medak Town. Since this was observed on 30th of May, it could not be conjectured whether they were returning from their wintering ground and were stragglers. In 1981 another flock was observed on the mud flats of the Dindi Reservoir 110 kms. south of Hyderabad city. This flock was observed periodically between January and May,81. Following scanty rains in the previous summer the reservoir had not filled up completely and considerable parts of the lake bed were exposed as mud flats which attracted Openbill storks, Painted Storks, White Necked Storks, Avocets, Spoonbills and number of other waders, ducks etc., ~~and~~ Flamingoes were also observed in flight over Nagarjunasagar by members of Bird Watchers Club of Andhra Pradesh. One live specimen was sent to the Nehru Zoological Park., Hyderabad from Rajampet in Cuddapah District in 1981, presumably from nearby Nandular Tank. There are also reports of sightings of Flamingoes from Manjira Reservoir about 50 kms. north west of Hyderabad city. Flamingoes ~~are~~ also reported from the backwaters and sea coast of Bavva in Srikakulam District. However their movements on inland waters is ~~fire~~ just being observed and remains to be worked-out.

Lesser flamingo: Phoeniconaias minor (Geoffroy)

Telugu - None recorded - Chinna Samadrapu Konga
Urdu - Chota Rajhans

This species unlike the previous one is not well known in Andhra Pradesh though Butler has recorded as occuring near Secunderabad. A smaller, more pink cousin of the Flamingo a flock of 8 birds was observed from January to May,1981 on the mud flats of Dindi Reservoir. Two of these were juveniles (grey in colour). The flock was observed feeding in association with but separately from the Larger Flamingo. There are reports of its occurance in Pulicat Lake also, but further confirmation is required.

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